

What should I do when my child won't clean his room?

Carefully consider your child's age, ability and experience before expecting them to keep their room clean by themselves.

Show your child how to keep their room clean by helping them make the bed and put the clothes away. Help them put their toys where they belong. Have your child gradually assume responsibility for keeping their room clean after leading by example.

Establish a routine for keeping a clean room. For example, have your child make the bed and straighten the room daily, put toys away after they are done playing, and dust and sweep the floor once a week. This routine should be consistent and followed by everyone in the home. Set aside a specific day of the week and specific time for room cleaning.

Give your child verbal praise by saying things like "Thank you for making your bed this morning!" Give your child rewards by allowing a friend over to play, or letting your child stay up late, or letting them play their favorite game.

Eliminate things that may distract your child from cleaning their room. Turn the TV off, have their friends go home, and stop any other distractions.

Make sure your child understands the relationship between their behavior and the consequences which follow. For example, your child should know that a dirty room results in a loss of privileges, or that toys that are not put away results in having them taken away for a period of time.